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Soviet Spy May Have Sold M His Escape, Ex-Convict Indicates

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LOS ANGELES, May 14 — A former convict said today that he met several times with Christopher John Boyce, the escaped spy for the Soviet Union, and delivered a package from him to a man with a "Russian-sounding voice" in Lima, Peru, last year.

The package apparently contained data about a clandestine Central Intelligence Agency satellite that many members of intelligence agencies regard as the nation's most important photo-reconnaissance system.

Mr. Boyce fled from the Federal Correctional Institution at Lompoc, Calif., on Jan. 21, 1980.

The former convict, Douglas Wargo, said in an interview that a raiding party of Federal agents missed Mr. Boyce by only nine hours when, acting on a tip that the fugitive was there, the agents converged on Mr. Wargo's San Diego home last October.

Both men served time at the Lompoc prison, but Mr. Wargo said he had not known Mr. Boyce there. Rather, he said, he met Mr. Boyce through another former Lompoc inmate in San Diego in March 1980, many months after his own release from prison and about two months after Mr. Boyce's escape.

He said that he had decided to discuss his association with Mr. Boyce now because, while he was convinced he had done nothing illegal, he felt he should make the story public.

Additional Secrets Sold?

Mr. Wargo's account is the first indication that Mr. Boyce, who was convicted in 1977 and sentenced to 40 years in prison for selling information about American espionage satellites to the Soviet Union, may have provided additional secrets to Soviet agents since his escape.

According to another prisoner, Mr. Boyce had said before his escape that he hoped to finance his flight partly by selling the Russians classified documents that he had hidden in the Arizona desert.

Mr. Wargo said that he did not know what had been in the package, for which

he was given \$3,500 in Lima, but that Mr. Boyce had referred to it as the "KH-11 manuscript."

KH-11 is a Central Intelligence Agency designation for the "Keyhole" satellite, a device capable of making high-resolution observations in the Soviet Union or other countries as if through a keyhole.

Mr. Boyce was convicted of selling data about another C.I.A. satellite project, Pyramider, while working as a code-room clerk in Redondo Beach, Calif., for TRW Systems Group, one of the C.I.A.'s principal suppliers of reconnaissance satellites.

Hundreds of Tips Pursued

Although the Government kept it secret at his trial, prosecution sources said afterward that he had also sold Soviet agents thousands of documents regarding a much more important satellite project, called Rhyolit.

Federal investigative sources, informed of Mr. Wargo's account, said today that they did not know about the trip to Peru or that they had missed Mr. Boyce so narrowly. But they said they planned to interview Mr. Wargo.

Mr. Wargo insisted that he did not know that Mr. Boyce was an escaped prisoner until agents told him on the day of the raid. Still, he said, "After talking to him, I feel kind of close to him. Had I known that he had escaped from the prison, and I knew the full magnitude of what he had done, I'd still have done the same things."

Mr. Wargo, 34 years old, a one-time Cleveland newspaper reporter, earned a reputation as a "jailhouse lawyer" while in prison on a mail fraud conviction.

He said that after his release he was asked by another former inmate to meet with an acquaintance "who was involved in the appeal process" and needed advice.

At a meeting in San Diego, he said, where the man gave him his name as "Chris," he suggested how he might approach an appeal of his case but did not

give him much hope of success.

At a meeting the next day in Tijuana, Mexico, Mr. Wargo said, "He told me that for him to do anything, to have an investigation for an appeal, he'd have to have some money, and he said he had a means to get it, but it required a trip to Peru. He said that he couldn't go himself and he couldn't use the mails because there was a mail strike in Peru. He asked me if I would go, and I said I would."

Mr. Wargo's passport indicates that he landed at Lima on March 12 and re-entered the United States March 15.

A Man With 'a Heavy Accent'

"I checked in at the Sheraton Hotel, which is near the U.S. Embassy in Lima, and called the number Chris gave me," Mr. Wargo said. "A man answered; he had a heavy accent, it could have been Yugoslavian, or a Russian-sounding voice. He said 'Hello,' and, I said, 'I have the KH-11 manuscript.'"

Mr. Wargo said that the man, "about 57, and bald, with graying hair at the edges, and drooping shoulders; maybe about five-nine," came to his hotel room and, while saying no more than a dozen words, opened the package and studied its contents.

"He looked through it for about 45 minutes and looked at every page; it looked like there were a lot of tables and specifications and some photographs on the paper. I said, 'Is that what you wanted?' but he didn't say anything. He seemed pleased with what he had, and he gave me \$3,500 in \$100-bill currency."

Mr. Wargo said he flew home and met Mr. Boyce two days later at the Tijuana airport, where he gave Mr. Boyce the stack of \$100 bills and Mr. Boyce gave him "the rest of my expenses, plus an additional couple of hundred."

They parted, Mr. Wargo said, then Mr. Boyce called again last October and asked for a small loan. Mr. Wargo, agreeing to the request, invited Mr. Boyce to spend the night at his home.

It was after Mr. Boyce left San Diego the next day, Oct. 25, that Federal agents, dressed in military fatigues and armed with automatic rifles, raided both Mr. Wargo's home and that of a friend.